

The Critical Discourse Analysis of Invectives in the Sexist Political Rhetoric: An Integrative Approach

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Abstract

The last half-century has witnessed a drastic aggravation of the political rhetoric modality. Political communication tends to become more and more aggressive, and many politicians' speech acts prove to be negatively charged utterances, incorporating vulgarisms, invectives, and bellicose rhetoric. They are characterized by an overabundance of emotionally estimative items and are based on deliberate violation of political etiquette principles. Expressive speech acts have become an integrative part of such a called political theater in which the strategical tool of political propaganda has been replaced by a stand-up show technology of political rivals downgrading and overthrowing.

This manuscript focuses on that part of politicians' abusive rhetoric, which is directed towards their feminine political rivals and commoners, whom the male politicians tend to address from their rostrums. It is aimed to disclose whether abusive male politicians' rhetoric against women is a part of their intended communicative strategy of their political rivals' downgrading in general or it is a personal viewpoint expressed in a sexist manner.

The generalized theorizing is supported by the example of a case study of invectives in sexist political discourse. This analysis is aimed at distinguishing "agonal" signs (the deliberate use of invectives in speech) and pragmatic borrowings (the undeliberate use of invectives) in their functioning, their pragma-semantic characteristics, and discursive markers, which helps us in the identification of both types of political discourse linguistic items. This analysis discloses vulnerable zones in the political communication pattern, which condition the use of invectives in politicians' speeches.

This research represents an integrative approach combining the Critical Discourse Analysis, the Political Discourse Semiotics Theory, the Role Theory, the Communication Theory, and others, in order to discover the actual reasons for men's aggressive sexist political rhetoric against women.

Keywords: "agonal" signs, pragmatic borrowings, sexist rhetoric, integrative theory, gender discrimination